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857 hide-and-seek and enjoy story-telling sessions, when the tales of 'Ti Malice and Bouki are recounted. Still older ones make drums out of jars and " arrange a dance." Little girls play with dolls made for them by the older children, while boys with sticks for horses organize themselves into " armies " with their
852 seniors as officers. When a child's teeth fall out, a minor ceremony is performed. As each tooth is detached, the child throws it on the roof of the mother's house, saying:

[539] *" Rat, rat, rat,*
M'jet' yun bel' 'ti dent
ba 'ou,
Ba'm yun vieille dent."

" Rat, rat, rat,
I give you a nice little tooth,
Give me an old tooth."

871 At this same time a beginning of formal education is made, especially if the child lives in the town or near enough to it to
872 allow him to reach one of the schools there. These schools are under both secular and Catholic auspices, and in them the pupil is instructed in the rudiments of European education, learning to read and write and to do simple problems in arith-
873 metic. If he shows proficiency and the means of his family permit, he may go on to a secondary school at Port-au-Prince or some other center; in the main, however, this schooling is all he ever receives, if he is permitted this much.

861 593 602 It is not to be supposed that a child is allowed to grow up without learning how to conduct himself in accordance with the traditional code of Haitian behavior, for the punishment that follows departures from this code is always both prompt and extremely painful, beating with sticks being the mode of correction most often employed. The mechanisms of education and control operate the more effectively because they are exercised by a fairly large group of persons, which includes not only the father and mother of the child, but also his grandparents, his uncles and aunts on both sides of the family, and
603 593 604 his older brothers, sisters, and cousins. Less restraint is exercised before grandparents than other relations, for while there

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are no customary playmate or joking relationships between grandparents and grandchildren, a man would rather go to his grandparents when in trouble than to his parents or uncles, because of the greater indulgence they show him.

At about the age of seven or eight the children's play-life is invaded by the serious work which they must increasingly assume. According to their sex, they are instructed by father or mother, each parent teaching the child the work he will be most occupied with as he matures. For some children, naturally, this education is deferred longer than for others, but, as a rule, boys of four or five may be seen playing about the field "helping" father by bringing him a leaf with which to light his cigarette, or "hoeing" in company with him, while girls are early permitted the pleasure of accompanying their mothers to market. By observing his father at work and by helping in small tasks the boy gradually learns how to do a man's work, until at about the age of fifteen he himself can cultivate a garden. Two or three years later he is given a field of his own and seed with which to sow it. The produce from it he brings to his mother to sell for him, and she keeps what money it brings, so that he will have his savings when he wishes to marry. Little girls, for whom acquaintance with the techniques of selling in the market is desirable, are given small articles to dispose of, and the proceeds belong to them, though some mothers demand an accounting from the young tradeswomen as a further measure of training. A woman also teaches her daughter to sew, to cook, and to wash and iron, instruction which is continued until a girl, ready to be given in marriage, is able to manage all of a woman's work.

If a family can afford the expense, children begin to be prepared for their first communion at eight or ten years of age; but members of poor families must wait until the money can be found — which means that some classes of candidates include grown men and women. At about the customary age for confirmation the children are informed of the family *vodun*

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584 in the same district, the background of the young man is well enough known so that no investigation is necessary, though unfailingly a long and formal discussion of the suitor, his qualities, and his prospects ensues. If his home is some distance away, however, meticulous inquiries are made not only concerning the young man and his immediate family, but of his ancestry as well. Should the suitor live near the home of the young woman, as usually happens, his own parents come with a *lettre de demand*. In earlier days the "letter" was written on flowered paper with a lacy border, but today plain colored paper does very well. When presented, it is wrapped in a green silk handkerchief, "for hope" — the handkerchief costs about five gourdes, and a similar amount is given the scribe — and is usually carried by the oldest man of the family; that is to say, the paternal grandfather if living, or if he is dead, the father, accompanied by the mother and perhaps the other grandparents. Today it is said that in the valley of Mirebalais the custom of presenting these letters of request is often disregarded, but is by no means extinct.[1]

584 212 [603] [822] [178]

The family of the girl is always apprised of the exact time of the visit, and refreshments are on hand. No reply is given at the time of the delivery of the "letter," since the families of both the father and the mother of the girl must consent to the match before it can be finally approved. However, at the stage of the courtship which the presentation of a "letter" implies, this delayed answer is a matter of form, for if the proposal had not been acceptable, the girl would not have been allowed to see the suitor. The refusal of a "letter" has been known to occur, but this is regarded as a deadly insult, and deep enmity between the families follows. Should the family of the girl, not wishing to be abrupt, accept the "letter" and proffer refreshments to its bearers, but later return the same "letter" as a sign of rejection, even this would be bitterly resented. Under such circumstances the young man takes steps to obtain revenge by providing himself with a

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be successful, he can count on the members of his family for financial and moral support.

These are not all the rights of the older members of the family, especially of the family head, over their juniors. All elders may punish by beating, though the oldest member of the family exercises that right most freely and may chastise those who are themselves grown men and women. If there is gossip about a boy or a girl, the family head calls the culprit to reprimand him or, if he believes the case a serious one, to beat him. Among the peasants, particularly, grown men go down on their knees before their elders, when so ordered, for a beating. Such punishments may be particularly severe if the culprit does not soon ask pardon, for since all who are older have the right to beat a younger relative, it sometimes happens that the punishment administered by the head of the family is not considered adequate, and another takes up the stick when the family head has put it down, so that two or three wands may be broken over the back of a stubborn offender. If such a one were to fight back, he would become "accursed," ceasing any longer to be considered a member of the family, and even though no legal steps might be taken to disinherit him, he would lose all caste. This right to beat is accorded by custom rather than by law, but an adult beaten by one of the elders of his own family would think long before he would sue. "There is always a consultation, and a man is discouraged from going to court."

Lest the impression may have been given, in considering the role of the elders and their relationship to the younger members of the family, that it is those in the father's line alone who are concerned, it must be emphasized that relatives of both parents exercise substantial control over a person. More than this, since marriage constitutes an agreement between families as well as between an individual man and woman, it follows that both paternal and maternal grand-

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parents are friendly toward each other, so that the conflict that might result from a division of authority rarely develops. Were it otherwise, it could easily happen that a person who had been ordered, or forbidden, to do something against his own wishes by the head of his paternal family would plead with the head of his mother's group and receive support to justify his disobedience. To most Haitians such a hypothetical incident was amusing to contemplate, for the elders are said always to work together. Rare is the occasion when one interferes with the decision of another, and never to the knowledge of the subject of such a decision.

A family elder who has no sons to care for him is well looked after by the other members of the group "until the grave." Fear as well as a moral obligation prompts this. "He might curse you," it is explained, or "He might say: 'Watch out for your own old age! You mistreated me in my old age, and you will suffer in yours.'" Such pronouncements are greatly dreaded, especially because of his control over the supernatural forces that aid or harm the family and its members.

The closeness of the tie between social institutions and economic life is most evident in the matter of inheritance. For though the prestige that accrues from the possession of wealth makes for strong competition through the exercise of individual initiative, yet supporting the struggle of an individual for the augmentation of his holdings are the forces of family sanction and family aid, while his very start in life is obtained primarily through the help of his relatives during their lifetime or the property he inherits from them at their death.

As has been suggested, all a man's children by a "legally" married wife inherit from him, or, if he has not espoused a wife by a Church wedding, the children of his *placée* wife or wives receive his property. Whether or not it is true that the "legitimate" children inherit three quarters of the possessions of their father, the "natural" children one fourth, and